



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

http://archive.org/details/mdtinterchange19mont_8

264.76
+6 J
1994
Tari

INTERchange

Employee Newsletter

January 1994

Director's Column

It's a pleasure and an honor to be selected by Governor Racicot to head the Montana Department of Transportation. In the few weeks I've been on the job, I've been confronted with a wide array of problems and issues and it's become even more apparent there's a great deal to learn and much to be done.

Coming in "cold" to a job like this, especially with the legislature in session, I have my hands full! So my attention is necessarily focused on the legislature and the issues that are, in part, external to the agency. I've met some of you, but for those of you I haven't met yet, I ask that you bear with me during this transition period. I look forward to meeting you and working with you on the important business that lies ahead.

Montana has a record of progress in transportation we can be proud of. Improvements on our highways have been substantial over the past decade. State support of 13 general aviation airports, the Essential Air service, and the aggressive transit program, coordinating with over 100 community agencies, helps provide Montanans access to transportation in a state where "getting around" has important and sometimes difficult implications.

The emphasis on improving customer service is a high priority throughout much of government

See **DIRECTOR**, page 2

MDT employees honored for outstanding service



Governor Racicot presents awards to Mark Goodman, left, and Mardella Vaagen on the right. The two MDT employees were honored recently for outstanding service to the state.

Two MDT employees received excellence awards from Governor Marc Racicot in September at a recognition ceremony held in the Capitol.

Mark Goodman, a hydraulics design engineer, and Mardella Vaagen, a maintenance payroll clerk, were given The Governor's Appreciation Award for Excellence in Performance.

They were honored along with 38 other state employees.

"(Mark's) designs consistently show a genuine concern for public safety while recognizing the hydraulic engineering needs," Racicot said.

Goodman said it was a shared award and he was honored and surprised to receive it.

Goodman said he has always stressed communication and talking with people on a one-to-one basis rather than as an employee and supervisor.

"I think it has to do specifically with (the people in) my office, the hydraulic

section. We really work as a team.

"I'm really not fond of singling out people. I think it's a team effort," he said.

Racicot praised Vaagen's extra effort to assure her work is correct and timely.

"She has demonstrated commendable willingness to assume new responsibilities," he said, adding she has exerted herself to refine skills.

"In addition, Mardie has always made a special effort to assist employees and the public with questions or concerns and assure that request are handled promptly and courteously," Racicot said.

Vaagen also said she felt the award was a team effort by the employees of the Miles City office.

She said the office has assumed extra work, including personnel, payroll, and oversight of the area's Maintenance Management System, with no additional personnel.

The awards are designed to honor state employees and showcase outstanding efforts.

MDT records top ranking

MDT, and two of its employees, have been recognized for putting everything in its place.

The Big Sky Chapter of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators recently recognized MDT as its "Company of the Year."

This award is given to the Montana company that either has contributed the most to the Montana chapter of ARMA or

has made significant progress with its records management system and the department qualified in both respects.

"All employees can share this award — from top management to office personnel — as it has taken a commitment on everyone's part to get where we are," said Jo Anne Eschler, manager of MDT's Office Support Unit.

Eschler was presented with the "Chap-

ter Member of the Year" award for her outstanding contributions to the ARMA organization.

Patti Borsberry was given the "Top Drawer" award for organizing the first annual silent auction held at the Big Sky Chapter's annual conference. The auction resulted in money raised to start the group's scholarship program.

Records Center provides a stroll through time

By Jo Eschler
Office Support Unit

Recently, the Office Support Unit invited everyone to "come . . . and take a stroll through time."

Employees viewed documents on 16 and 35mm microfilm reader/printers, looked at printed copies of filmed documents, examined displays of old depart-

ment photos and records, and saw much, much more.

The 20-year-old department newsletters with pictures of current employees seemed to be one the most popular displays. But, documents from the 'Miss Highway Department' contests were right up there in popularity (yes, we've come a long way, baby!).

The open-house sessions provided employees with an opportunity to learn about

the accomplishments and of the future goals for the records management program. The Office Support Unit was established in May 1991.

As public employees, we're all charged to protect the department's records and history. Remember, today's documents can become tomorrow's history. Contact Patti Borsberry to review any documents you feel may have historical significance.

DIRECTOR, from page 1

and business and I intend to continue that emphasis at MDT. Dedication to public service is a key part of what we have to offer as state employees. And many of our employees have a well-deserved reputation of cheerful and dedicated service, as evidenced by the letters we receive from the public.

This attitude is something that will serve us well as we make our way through these difficult times.

I'm committed to the strategic planning process and to putting to work the results of the substantial employee effort aimed at improving the organization and the way we carry out our business. I firmly believe the only value any plan has is in its implementation.

One tactic or initiative I've endorsed and intend to emphasize is a participatory management style. It's a style I'm personally familiar with and comfortable with—I know it works and I look forward to the challenge of making it work at MDT.

I think most of you are aware the department and the administration are supporting an increase in fuel taxes. And that support is for good cause. In 1993, Montana begins paying \$17 million per year to retire bonds which financed the majority of the state financed Reconstruction Trust Fund Program carried out during the 1980s. And it's important we take advantage of the available federal-aid and continue the trans-

portation improvement program begun in the '80s. A substantial budget increase in the maintenance program is also part of our legislative proposal, in order to meet expanding responsibilities and bolster the budget that's been eroded over the years by inflation and new costs.

Rapid changes in transportation are occurring nationally, as well as in Montana. The new federal surface transportation law enacted by Congress in December of 1991 significantly alters federal-aid highway funding and systems. Approval of free trade agreements with Canada and Mexico present opportunities and challenges as well, in international trade and, therefore, in transportation.

As I wrote in my letter to the 53rd Legislative session introducing our most recent legislative report, Montana's economy will grow and expand, but only if we have the infrastructure in place to handle that expansion. Transportation is essential. And so I'm eager and ready to help the department and the state meet this challenge. We all play a role, we're all involved to some degree, and I look forward to working with you and the citizens of our state on the important tasks that lie ahead.

Marv Dye
Director of Transportation

District News

From the Glendive District:

By Carole Olson
Glendive District

Announcements

Gerald Wiseman, Maintenance Tech I in the Baker Section, won the overall championship at the Snow Rodeo in Great Falls for the second year in a row. He also placed first, second or third in all the individual championships.

Liana Handran, Administrative Assistant IV of Wolf Point, gave birth to a six pound seven ounce girl, Cydney Marie, on March 7.

Tammy Erickson, Purchasing Technician of Glendive District Office, gave birth to a seven pound nine ounce girl, Kelsey Ann, on April 23.

Patty Patterson, Right-of-Way Agent I, gave birth to a seven pound nine ounce daughter, Kaylee Marie, on August 2.

Additions to the MDT extended family of employees include: **Bruce Haley**, a truck driver at Ashland, and temporary employees **Paula Kalloch** in the Glendive office and **Terry Omland**, at Miles City.

Butte office "branches out"

By Cheryl Zorn
Butte District

The Butte Ronald McDonald House's 1993 Festival of Trees was a success in part due to the donation by the MDT Butte District Employees.

The Festival of Trees is an annual event where groups donate decorated trees for auction with the proceeds going to the local Ronald McDonald House.

This year the Butte Highway Employees decorated a large tree with the theme of "Planes, Trains, and Automobiles." The tree was selected as one of the top 10 trees and was included in the live auction. The trees not chosen as part of the top 10 were sold in a silent auction. There were over 50 entrants in this year's event.

The tree was purchased by Eddie Thomas Insurance, a local business.

With over six dozen small cars and planes, and a working train at the bottom of the tree, the ornaments are sure to provide someone's kids with hours of enjoyment long after Christmas.

MCS Officer Assists Arrest

Glendive MCS Compliance Officer, Robert Blome was a key player in the apprehension of a Washington man driving a stolen semi tractor.

Blome clocked the 18-year-old Jason Clancy driving in excess of 85 mph, and Blome gave chase. The tractor trailer then tipped over and Clancy was nabbed.

Clancy is charged with attempted reckless eluding and operating a commercial vehicle without the proper license. Clancy is also wanted in the Fargo, N.D. area for the theft of the tractor which he wrecked when attempting to exit I 94 on to Merrill Avenue in Glendive, according to the accident report.

Special gifts for retirees

John Fowler, Shop Supt. at the Wolf Point Division Office received several gifts from fellow employees when he retired recently. One gift was a Star Quilt. Also, he received a paint gun to work on his hobby of restoring old cars.

Ray Halvorson, Fld Mtce. Supv A at Culbertson retired and was given a set of harness. Ray's initials were tooled into the leather of the harness, and the set is beautiful. Ray said he thought it was a very touching gift.



Hear! Hear!

Loud noise can cause serious damage to your hearing. The louder the noise, the less time it takes to cause damage. An 8-hour exposure to 85dB is the OSHA limit; the limit drops to 1 hour at 102dB.

So what's a dB, and how do I know if I meet one (or 85)? dB means decibel, a measure of loudness. If you have to shout to be understood over background noise from 3 feet away, the noise level is probably too high.

Wear hearing protection. If you can hear speech over the noise without earplugs, you can hear it with them, it's all just quieter. If you need hearing protection on the job, talk to your supervisor.

Remember! Hearing loss is permanent. You can lose up to 40% before you notice there's a problem.



Welcome Bill

We welcome Bill Pittenridge to our staff as a safety and health specialist. Bill will be handling the workers compensation claims and other safety duties. His phone number is 444-7285 or (800) 531-2047.

Manager's corner

How to have a great workplace

1. Determine a direction for your workplace and share that with your employees. Let them make it their "cause".
2. Be open about your group's business. Share plans, budget information, etc.
3. Allow and encourage employees to take part in important decisions.
4. Be accessible to employees.
5. Ask employees to set their own goals to match the organization's.
6. Communicate regularly, listen, reinforce achievement with a pat on the back or a thanks, and coach others to better performance.
7. Trust employees to "do it right".
8. Be flexible. A manager's job is to remove barriers to better performance.
9. Make employees feel important.

Employee's corner

Handling Angry Co-workers

Follow these tips to help cool off anger:

- Don't argue.
- Don't encourage them to not be angry.
- Don't lecture or talk down to them.
- Ask the angry person to explain the problem. Don't interrupt. Listen.
- Empathize. Repeat how the person says they feel and why.
- Ask for the person's ideas on ways to deal with the situation, then offer some of your own.
- Figure out how to compliment the person. Sometimes people get mad when their self esteem is in the cellar.

Remember slips, trips and falls

Injuries from slips, trips and falls appear with the snow and ice, causing back, head and other injuries. We've had very little snow and ice yet, but we've had three injuries due to slips, trips and falls. **Don't let it happen to you.**



- Wear shoes with slip resistant soles.
- Watch for ice and snow on equipment and building steps.
- Watch for ice and water on floors, steps and sidewalks.
- Remove the ice or snow or apply sand or deicer.

Pills

If pills get stuck in your throat, try taking them with 2 quick gulps of water without pausing between swallows.

What's cooking?

Vegetables cooked in a microwave retain more vitamins than when boiled in water. Boiling water breaks them down.

Thinking safely paying off in '92 and '93

Congratulations to Headquarters, Glendive, Billings, Missoula, and Wolf Point for having the lowest accident rates in fiscal year 1992 and 1993.

Many divisions dropped their accident rate in 1993 including Great Falls, Havre, Lewistown, Glendive, Wolf Point, Miles City and Headquarters. Three cheers for the improvement!

In fiscal 1992, the department paid about \$1.25 million to workers' compensation premiums. This is a cost of 24 cents per hour per employee; our claim cost was higher than our insurance premium, making a loss ratio of 118%. This ratio of claims to premiums should be 20 to 30%.

We did better on lost time injuries. We had 261 injuries and

averaged 3.6 lost time injuries for each 100 employees. This compares with a statewide average of 7-8 for each 100 employees so congratulations to all of us.

In fiscal year 1993 we paid about \$1.8 million on our workers' compensation premiums, a cost of 34.2 cents per hour. However our claim costs dropped dramatically to about \$360,000, making our loss ratio 20.5%; if we can keep up the good work our insurance premium costs will drop in the future.

Even though our total injuries increased to 278 in fiscal year 1993, our lost time injury ratio dropped to 2.75, a 24% drop from 1992.

Overall, our work environment is becoming safer. Thanks to everyone and let's think safety first and continue to improve.

Give yourself a pat on the back

Thanks to everyone's attention to working safely, the Department won the Governor's Safety award for large employers. We competed against public and private organizations, and are the first state agency to win this award.

Governor Racicot presented the award at a ceremony in Kalispell in October.

MDT employees accept the Governor's Safety Award from Governor Marc Racicot. Pictured are (left to right) Dan Williams, Governor Racicot, Jim Leary, Bill Pittenridge, Marvin Dye, Barbara Martin and Russ McDonald. (not pictured: Mike Buckley and Jan Counter)



Mail Call

August 26, 1993

Dear Governor Racicot,

Sometimes when one dreams for a long time about going to a particular place, it turns out the dream was better than the reality. Not so with my dream which was a travel ambition. It was my desire to see Montana.

As a youth in Ohio, some 60 years ago, I wanted to see your great state. Then, when the Interstates arrived, it was my desire to drive through Montana on I 90.

In early May of this year, my ambition was finally realized. My wife and I drove the I 90 route. And, I want to enthusiastically report actually seeing Montana was much better than the dream! You truly have a beautiful state.

However, the above is only part of the reason for this letter. I also want to express, through you, our thanks to the many vol-

unteers who keep the roadsides so clean. My wife and I drive several thousand miles each year and we have seen hundreds of signs stating "The next two miles of roadway has been cleaned by the XYZ group."

But we never see anyone cleaning and the roadside is often strewn with the trash of many weeks if not months. *Not so in Montana!* We saw several groups diligently at work along I 90. All ages and all sizes. And I guess I know why. If I lived in such a beautiful place, I too would want to keep it that way.

I hope you will be able to express our "thanks" to these many groups and individuals. Their efforts certainly made our visit to Montana much more enjoyable!

Sincerely
Paul F. Mosher
Dallas, Texas

Strategic Plan update: well on the way

By Lisa Moise

Transportation Planning

What's going on with the Strategic Plan?

Since January 1993, MDT has been working to meet the goals of our Mission Statement with the continuing effort of the Strategic Action Plan.

The Strategic Action Plan has four basic elements: Missions and Goals, Strategic Initiatives, Objectives, and Tactics.

- Missions and Goals are essentially our Mission Statement.

- Strategic Initiatives are major broad actions addressing key issues for reaching our goals.
- Objectives are measurable, realistic goals emphasizing results and supporting a strategic initiative.
- Tactics are measurable, "bite-size" actions linked to an objective which can be assigned to a specific position or work unit.

Collectively, these components form the framework of the Strategic Action Plan.

So what have we been doing?

MDT is currently working on 346 specific tactics. At the end of September, we had completed, or nearly completed, 25 percent (88) of those tactics. About 70 percent of these were completed on schedule.

While these numbers suggest we're making progress, they also show there's plenty more to be done. MDT has 109 tactics with upcoming due dates, and 72 percent (79) of these tactics are due within the next six months. To realize the Missions and Goals, we must continue to work toward completing the individual tactics.

Nearly a third of our tactics are considered ongoing or annual projects. While these tactics haven't been assigned a due date, and may not be as visible, they're just as important.

Often, these ongoing, annual tactics are part of our regular routines. For example, Strategic Initiative I, Objective 2, Tactic 1 calls for the Director's Office and all divisions to conduct regularly-scheduled staff meetings with agendas and minutes. In most cases, this tactic has become part of an ongoing routine. Most divisions are holding staff meetings, and the minutes are forwarded to Director Dye for his information.

Remember, a good way to keep informed about the status of the strategic plan is to look through the Initiative Report on the VAX. This report tracks the progress of all tactics, including the annual and ongoing.

Mission Goals

Our Mission is to:

SERVE THE PUBLIC BY ESTABLISHING A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT EMPHASIZES SAFETY, ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS.

Safety

Emphasize and coordinate safety throughout the transportation system.

Environment

Integrate environmental considerations into all department plans, designs and actions.

Transportation Efficiency

Facilitate the efficient movement of goods and people within Montana.

Accessibility

Promote cost-effective accessibility to transportation for all Montanans.

Performance

Be resourceful and strive for excellence in organizational effectiveness, efficiency and accountability.

Employees

Establish a work environment that fosters employee participation, recognition and accountability.

Service Orientation

Establish a service orientation towards constituents, customers and the public by being responsive, informative and open to outside involvement.



GIS helps fulfill Strategic Initiative

Strategic Initiative #6 calls for identifying ways to use emerging technology effectively.

During work on this Initiative, the Information Services Bureau (ISB) developed an application tying infrastructure related systems on ORACLE to Microstation Montana maps.

This provides the department a Geographic Information System (GIS) capability. With this, it's possible to do a data search based on very flexible "query" criteria along segments of the highways de-

picted on Montana maps. The results can then be viewed graphically on these maps.

The whole area of GIS for Transportation (or GIS-T) is being researched, developed and implemented by DOT's all across the country. The application we've developed is right in line with what other DOT's are doing.

We now must:

1. Continue expanding our current GIS capability to support other existing data bases like Bridge Inventory, Maintenance Management, etc.

2. Establish a plan for capturing real world longitude/latitude coordinates for key points of our infrastructure.
3. Pursue an integration of current GIS capabilities with non-MDT GIS capabilities available from the State Library, The Department of Natural Resources and others.

ISB is currently demonstrating our GIS application, using HIS Roadlog information that's available to ORACLE. If anyone is interested in seeing this, please contact Denis Burke at 7615.

Happenings at MDT

Service Awards

35 years

Gerald C. Helzer, James A. Stoner.

30 years

Michael P. Cloud, Carl L. Engstedt, Claude J. Flynn, Arthur L. Little, James K. Tompkins, Larry N. Wolf.

25 years

Gary E. Gran, Howard L. Kyriss, Richard H. Lieberg, Clifford T. Tennant, Daniel F. Zahn.

20 years

Leslie R. Bender, Ronald E. Cebuhar, David R. Hamilton, Carolyn O. Knuckles, Alan Rainey, Leroy E. Strong.

15 years

Bert H. Bouma, Merlin C. Frydenlund, Gary W. Gee, Carlene D. Hembree, Samuel R. Kirby, Leonard D. Larson, Loretta Macrow, Marvin E. Page, William D. Pierce, Neil S. Swartz, Leland J. Vannatta, Larry C. Wood.

10 years

Pat Bauer, Mark E. Cyr, James E. Day, Jr., S. Ilene Eggum, Cynthia R. Kafka, Gary L. Maas, Jeff Mullins, Barbara J. Proulx, Michael E. Ramsbacher, Kim Williams Randall, Joseph James Sanders, Lloyd G. Shuman, Tony F. Strainer.

5 years

Roger E. Anderson, James R. Archer, Monette Blades, Gaylen W. Boelke, Michael G. Bousliman, William Dale Brewer, Ross W. Broere, Larry W. Brown, Buster B. Bullock, DeeAnn Clancy, Terry L. Delger, John A. Fisher, Dennis D. Fraser, Paul R. Harper, John J. Holland, Jr., Richard D. Johnson, Dorothy G. Kelley, Tim G. Mahlum, Mark M. Peterson, Richard M. Prokop, Jr., Deanna Kay Rice, Dirk D. Roberts, Ben W. Rogers, Steven A. Schwartz, Rhonda C. Strainer, Jonathan L. Swartz, Ross A. Tervo, Cheryl M. Zorn.

Retirements

Charles Bauman, Deer Lodge, Field Supervisor A.

Keenan Bingham, Clancy, Administrator of Multimodal Transportation Planning.

Theodore Bisch, Butte, Materials Suprv.

Roger Blossom, Bozeman, Civil Engineering Specialist.

Dennis Blunt, Miles City, Division Maintenance Supervisor.

Victor Buerkle, East Helena, Traffic Technician II.

Glen Carter, Shelby, Mech./Machinist.

Charles Chambers, East Helena, Designer II.

Robert Chapman, Lewistown, Utility Agent.

Norman Cherry, Park City, Mechanic/Machinist.

Clarence Christiansen, Lincoln, Utility Agent.

Dan Clark, Grass Range, Field Suprv. A.

Philip Colbert, Helena, Supervisor of Traffic Operations.

Donald Dan, Terry, Field Supervisor A.

Hugh Dougherty, Butte, Fld. Proj. Mngr.

Robert Evans, Butte, Equip. Operator I.

John Fowler, Wolf Point, Shop Supt.

John Fusaro, Augusta, Truck Driver.

Robert Gilman, Twin Bridges, Field Project Manager.

Gordon Giulio, Boulder, Field Suprv. A.

Ray Grant, Butte, Civil Eng. Specialist.

Rosemary Graveley, Helena, Administrative Officer I.

Ray Halvorson, Culbertson, Field Supervisor A.

Lewis Harrell, Lewistown, Maintance

Gerald Helzer, Laurel, Engineering Technician II.

Harold Hoffman, Helena, Audit Mngr.

Anthony Holstein, Glasgow, Engineering Technician II.

Lyle Hoover, Helena, Traffic Section.

Richard Howell, Helena, Planner 5.

Lawrence Ivanovitch, Helena, Environmental Implementation Specialist.

William Kaufman, Havre, Division Maintenance Supervisor.

Ralph Keepers, Dillon, Equipment Operator II.

James Kelly, Helena, Designer III.

Edward Kenison, Dillon, Eng. Tech. II.

Steven Kologi, Helena, Deputy Director.

Gerald Kuester, Glendive, Eng. Officer I.

David Kwasney, Sidney, Field Suprv. A.

Tony Lanch, Butte, Shop Superintendent.

David Lloyd, Billings, Engineering Technician III.

Donald Loveless, Kalispell, Field Supervisor B.

James Lyon, Bozeman, Engineering Techni-

cian II.

Alfred Mann, Sidney, Truck Driver.

James Martin, Townsend, Designer II.

Charles Matteson, Glendive, Truck Driver.

Eugene McMahon, Helena, Chemist Supervisor.

Howard Micklewright, West Yellowstone, Field Supervisor A.

Mitch Miller, Helena, Design Supervisor.

William Morton, Jr., Great Falls, Traffic Engineer.

Donald Murray, Dillon, Engineering Technician II.

John Nelson, Wisdom, Field Supervisor A.

Donald Niedege, Miles City, Field Supervisor A.

James Powell, Helena, Contract Tech.

Ervin Predmore, Helena, Design Tech. II.

Kenneth Quale, Glendive, Fld. Proj. Mngr.

Darold Reinhart, Glendive, Engineering Technician III.

James Reynolds, Philipsburg, Field Supervisor A.

Richard Reynolds, Glendive, GVW Officer I.

M. Keith Roane, Stanford, Maintenance Crew Leader.

Robert Ross, Helena, Civil Engineering Specialist.

Larry Sain, Glasgow, Field Proj. Mngr.

Leslie Saunders, Livingston, Field Project Manager.

Walter Smith, Great Falls, Field Project Manager.

Harold Spilde, Jr., Great Falls, Striper Driver.

James Trainor, Helena, Supervisor Construct Estimates.

Robert Vonada, Helena, Carpenter.

James Walker, Ennis, Field Supervisor A.

John Walsh, Helena, Civil Engineering Specialist.

James Wilcox, East Helena, Designer III.

Larry Williams, Helena, Civil Engineering Specialist.

John Wise, Jr., Billings, Service Combination A.

Larry Wolf, Glendive, Field Proj. Mngr.

Edward Zemljak, Butte, Carpenter.

We'll be listing other retirements not listed here and a story summarizing 1993's retirement statistics in next issue.



3 0864 1006 3232 5

On the Environmental Front

By Shannon Schultz

Environmental and Hazardous Waste

The Environmental and Hazardous Waste Bureau's staff is frequently asked questions on a wide variety of topics ranging from asbestos to deer kills, and hazardous wastes to park lands.

More and more, MDT Personnel are stopping by or calling to get the information they suspect they need to do their job, and here are some of the most frequently asked questions.

Question

What is a "significant park" and what does that title mean?

Answer

In an environmental context, determining whether or not the word "significant" is correctly applied can be worth a million dollars or more.

"Significance" is usually associated with impacts or affects an action has on the quality of the human environment. This determination is made by considering the context in which it will occur and the intensity of the action.

Intensity refers to the severity of the action. Context refers to the setting as a whole.

Therefore, a "significant park" is one that either the owners (usually Fish, Wildlife, and Parks or a Federal entity) or the

public view as valuable resource for recreation, wildlife refuge, historic value, etc.

We must ask the owners to make a determination as to whether it is "significant".

In the absence of a determination, we must assume that it is, and proceed to follow Section 4(f) of the Transportation Act and do an Impacts Assessment. This requires avoidance and other alternatives to be analyzed for feasibility and prudence (constructability and how wise it might be).

It also includes a determination of effect, and where appropriate, any mitigation. This process can take up to nine months, so, if parkland can be avoided, let's do it.

Question

When can we hold a formal Public Hearing?

Answer

Fifteen days (minimum) after the environmental document has been approved. In the case of an EIS (environmental Impact Statement) the hearing can be held after the Draft EIS has been approved by the FHWA. in the case of an EA (Environmental Assessment), a hearing cannot be held until the EA has been approved in its final form.

This can be confusing since we refer to an EA before it is approved as a preliminary

EA for lack of a better term. (Mistakenly, it is referred to as a Draft EA also.)

The term "Preliminary EA" is not a formal category of environmental documentation.

However, we must call it something while its being worked on and circulated in-house; the term preliminary seems to foot the bill.

In the case of CE or Cat-Ex's (Categorical Exclusions), the same holds true: the approved CE must be made available to the public 15 days prior to holding a formal Public Hearing.

Question

When we buy land to be used for Fishing Access sites, in whose name is the land purchased?

Answer

Lands purchased for park and recreation purposes are bought in the name of the operator.

MDT will buy such lands as mitigation for impacts to lands of similar use and value. MDT will not be responsible for maintaining the site after initial construction.

Editor's note

In July's issue it was not mentioned that the Transportation Employee Benefit Association (TEBA) supplied refreshments at the annual National Transportation Week Road Race

TEBA also donated \$300 to the April 1 Adopt-A-Plant Program.

TEBA is funded through coffee pot rental fees and a percentage of the profits received from concession machines

in the Helena Headquarters Building.

Also in July's issue, the story on the MDT Bowling Tournament in Billings, neglected to mention the results of the mixed team event.

The Guys and Dolls from Billings, consisting of Ray Studebaker, Robin Studebaker, Bill Hill and Kathy Hill were pinned with the championship.

Apologies from the *Interchange* staff.

INTERchange

Employee Newsletter

The employee newsletter is published by the Public Affairs Bureau, Montana Department of Transportation:

Interchange staff:

Sean Seville

Dennis Unsworth

The following contributed articles for this issue:

Dennis Burke

Jo Eschler

Lisa Moisey

Carole Olson

Shannon Schultz

Cheryl Zorn

Submissions and correspondence should be addressed to:

Public Affairs Bureau

2701 Prospect Avenue

PO Box 201001

Helena, MT 59620-1001

(406) 444-6200

